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HOUSE BILL 624 By
DeBerry L

SENATE BILL 978
By Ford J

AN ACT to designate a certain bridge in Memphis as the "Reverend Herbert C. Kneeland, Jr. Bridge".

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain public highways and bridges to honor those exemplary citizens who have contributed significantly to the overall growth and prosperity of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Herbert C. Kneeland, Jr. has been and continues to be an instrumental force in the growth and prosperity of Memphis, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Kneeland has humbly served the Lord and his congregation as the pastor of Union Valley Baptist Church in Memphis for over thirty-six years; and

WHEREAS, a gentleman of great integrity, probity and industry, Pastor Kneeland is an active member of the Baptist Ministerial Association and serves with acumen as Vice President of the 60-1 Ward Civic Club for the betterment of his neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Kneeland was elected Pastor of Union Valley Baptist Church in 1960; the church was then located at Rozell Street in Memphis with a congregation of approximately 75 members; and

WHEREAS, in just ten months, Pastor Kneeland, with those 75 members intact, relocated to the present location at 1051 E. McLemore, where through his leadership, preaching

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the gospel, and his compassionate ways in reaching out to help the lost and unsaved; over 1500-2000 members have responded, both young and old; and

WHEREAS, many accomplishments have been made over the years under Pastor Kneeland's leadership: housing for the homeless has been opened in the community and people are being both spiritually and physically fed through the church; and

WHEREAS, by means of his inspired guidance, one of the largest day care centers in the city was opened and provisions were made for the working parents to pay according to income; and

WHEREAS, along with his other commitments, Pastor Kneeland has worked in the N I P program, making sure the homeless are placed in decent housing; and

WHEREAS, because of Pastor Kneeland's leadership and determination for the church to remain at its present location, the church has purchased land and expanded tremendously, even as other churches have moved out of the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Kneeland has been a character witness for many persons at the Justice Center; and

WHEREAS, one of his proudest moments for his congregation was The Youth & Young Adult Choir of Union Valley being nominated as the # 1 choir in the Mid-South area and being awarded this prize through the Quaker Oats Company; and

WHEREAS, many youth programs have been successfully organized under Pastor Kneeland's leadership, and clothes and food are distributed to the needy through the OutReach Program; and

WHEREAS, Union Valley has an educational building that serves the neighborhood for community services, voting activities, neighborhood watch meetings and many other purposes; and

WHEREAS, The motto coined by Pastor Kneeland states perfectly the church's purpose:

“This church stands with open arms to befriend the friendless, to help lift the fallen, to bring joy to the lonely, to make known God’s love to a sinful humanity”; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly wishes to specially honor Reverend Kneeland as an excellent representative of the true spirit of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the bridge that spans Interstate 240 near the intersection of East McLemore Avenue and Cummings Street within the corporate boundaries of the City of Memphis is hereby designated as the “Reverend Herbert C. Kneeland, Jr. Bridge” in honor of this extraordinary pastor’s life of purpose, commitment and integrity.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating such bridge as the “Reverend Herbert C. Kneeland, Jr. Bridge”.

SECTION 3. The erection of signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.